

City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Seniors and Persons with Physical Disabilities Tuesday, March 13, 2012 9:30-11:00 PM

Fourteen (14) persons participated in the Focus Group on Seniors and Persons with Physical Disabilities, representing service providers, housing programs, advocacy organizations, and community representatives.

Populations in Need

There was clear agreement on the population most in need:

• Senior homeowners (10), who could remain in their own homes if they had greater access to in-home care and housing retrofit and rehab assistance.

Other populations in need include:

- Seniors with dementia (3), who may be discharged from residential care, but may not be eligible for in-home care;
- Seniors with other cognitive impairment (3), including developmental disabilities, for whom case management services may be difficult to access;
- Grandparents raising grandchildren (3), often living on a fixed and inadequate income and in inadequate family housing;
- Persons living with AIDS (2), show may experience rapid aging, having to choose between medication and housing, needing housing to meet their long-term needs;
- Persons with felony convictions (2);
- Persons with physical disabilities living in subsidized or private units (1), who experience difficulties in obtaining waivers for retrofit, as well as the cost burdens of altering units and returning them to their original condition;
- Hospitalized persons (1) who lose their homes due to illness and hospitalization:
- Older persons who have lost a spouse's income or social security benefits;
- HUD residents who temporarily breach rules (e.g., temporarily house additional family members);
- · Persons depending on disability payments alone, which fail to keep up with expenses, e.g., utilities;
- Persons who lack permanent housing, moving from one transitional housing arrangement to another;

Service Needs

Considerable support was evident for:

Additional financial support (8)

Other priority needs included:

- Assistance with co-pays for medications (4);
- A web-based, central repository of quality, updated resources (4), such as www.mycommunitynm.org
 - Regular self-updating by listed organizations;
 - o Regular promotion via email and gatherings;
 - Searchability is the key.

Also:

- Coordination of services, esp. between City and County
- More open hours for Senior Center computer labs;
- Nutritional education for seniors;
- Expanded access to food programs (City working with State food programs);
- Dental care for seniors;
- Opportunities for seniors to give back to the community.

Physical Factors in Housing and Community Development

The single most important factor identified was

• Access to public transportation or agency van (8)

Other physical/environmental factors include:

- Accessible units for renters in public, subsidized and private units (3);
- Gardens (1);
- Walking trails/open spaces (1);
- Appropriate assisted devices and broadened definition of service animals, allowed to reside in the units;
- Crosswalks for busy streets;

Fair Housing - Not Available

SENIORS/PHYSICAL DISABILTIES FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Persons with Behavioral Health & Substance Abuse Issues Tuesday, March 13, 2012 1:00-2:30 PM

Fifteen (15) persons participated in the Focus Group on persons with behavioral health and substance abuse issues, representing service providers, advocacy organizations, and a funds administrative organization for behavioral health.

Populations in Need

The populations deemed most in need were:

- Persons transitioning from criminal justice institutions or in-patient treatment facilities (11), who have particular difficulty accessing housing;
- Persons with dual diagnoses involving behavioral health and substance abuse (11);
- Persons with a history of homelessness (10) who also
 - o Have severe and persistent mental illness;
 - Require access to medical services;
 - Have felony convictions;
 - Have histories of eviction or bad credit;
 - Are low-income

Other populations in need include:

- Parents with behavioral health disabilities, who are unable to work (6);
- Persons experiencing trauma from domestic violence, sexual violence, street violence (2)
- Recently homeless, first-timers, or homeless for a short duration (1)

Service Needs

Considerable support was evident for a comprehensive "package" of reintegration services (12), which include:

- Transitional housing;
- Reintegration skills and supports;
- Diagnosis and service planning;
- Addition therapy;
- Medical management;
- Peer mentorship;
- Daily living skills;

- Financial literacy;
- Tenant/landlord responsibilities;
- Case management that can follow-up on referrals;
- Services that are available as long as needed:
- All in the context of a **coordinated**, unfragmented behavioral health system.

Other needs identified include:

- More options for substance abuse treatment beyond detox (9);
- Assistance with deposits and utilities (7);
- Project-based Section 8 vouchers with supportive services for special needs populations (5);
- Public transportation, including extended hours for bus service (5);
- Filling in service gaps (2)
- More Assertive Community Treatment programs (2);
- Units reserved for on-site, resident case-managers (1);
- Consumer input on programs.

Physical Factors in Housing and Community Development

The most important factors identified were:

- Energy efficiency (8); and
- Proximity to a sheltered bus stop, with buses that stopped more than once a day (7).

Other factors include:

- Mixed-used communities(4);
- Capital Improvement Program incentives for private landlords (4)
- Pet-friendly; dog park (3)
- Secure: gated, street lighting (3)
- Close to grocery stores (2)
- Greenery (1)
- Code enforcement (1)
- Walking distance to jobs (see mixed-use communities, above) (1)

Fair Housing

Issues:

- Criminal history
- Homelessness
- Bad credit reports
- Nuisance complaints
- Domestic violence
- Perceived behavioral health problems

Actions:

- Review City policies that that may discourage landlords from renting to populations in need, including the City's nuisance abatement and crime free properties programs;
- City provide on-going, perpetual fair housing training to private sector landlords, property managers, and staff;
- City assistance and coordination in increasing public awareness of this population's challenges, available services, and positive outcomes.

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Asian Americans

Wednesday, March 14, 2012 9:30-11:00 AM

Two (2) members of local organizations representing the diverse Asian-American population of Albuquerque were in attendance, with additional input from the City's representative on [Juanita's title?].

Populations in Need

The two populations deemed most in need of services were:

- First generation immigrants, who face barriers relating to:
 - o Language (the two largest language groups are Mandarin Chinese and Vietnamese);
 - Accessing health care;
 - Legal issues;
 - o Recruiting brides via the internet.
- Families, who face barriers relating to:
 - Lack of understanding of cultural differences;
 - Lack of understanding on how to access and maneuver within institutional systems;
 - o Children serving as translators for adults.

Other populations in need include:

- Older Asian Americans, who have difficulties (in part due to language) accessing in-home care and care facilities, among other services;
- Victims of domestic violence, who experience isolation, potential evictions;
- Veterans, who may or may not have citizenship, are disabled, or low-income;
- Undocumented immigrants.

Service Needs

The most critical needs identified were:

- Information on how to identify and access services, housing and economic opportunities; for example, free, culturally appropriate workshops, with interpretation/translation as needed, with topics on;
 - Know your rights
 - Advocacy skills
 - Computer literacy

- How to access housing and economic opportunities
- Training for staff at housing authorities, service providers, health care facilities, etc., on how to provide culturally appropriate services to Asian American populations, including legal requirements for providing translation services
- Language and Cultural Training and Awareness on the part of service providers
- Grants and low interest loans for housing and businesses

Other needs include:

- A readily accessible pool of translators, interpreters and cultural brokers; the group noted that knowing the language is not sufficient without also knowing the cultural context(s).
- "New to America" resources guides and brochures

Physical Factors in Housing and Community Development

The most important physical factors to consider are:

- Proximity to playgrounds;
- Proximity to schools;
- Low-crime locations, with garbage and street clean-up;
- Housing with common spaces: a courtyard, garden or common room;
- Sculpture and artwork;
- An Asian American Cultural Center in the neighborhood

Fair Housing

Issues:

- Asian stereotypes, both positive (Japanese are quiet and neat) and negative (Muslims are terrorists);
- Language barriers;
- Lack of knowledge of rights and systems.

Actions:

- Information/training for landlords and tenants, including brochures, resource directories;
- Public Service Announcements on radio and TV in Asian languages;
- Outreach through faith-based organizations, community centers and schools;
- Enforce laws, rules and regulations; hold landlords accountable;
- Site visits to housing and agency offices.

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Immigrants

Wednesday, March 14, 2012 1:00-2:30 PM

Four (4) representatives of organizations offering early childhood, family supportive services and health care to the immigrant community were in attendance.

Populations in Need

Two populations were identified as being most in need of services:

- Immigrants who lack documentation (4), including:
 - o Persons who lack legal immigration status;
 - o Persons who are legally in the country, but lack other essential documentation, e.g., birth certificates, etc.
- Families (3), including:
 - o Large, multi-generational families;
 - Those families with children who are citizens, but whose parents may be at risk of deportation;
 - o Families whose members are separated.

Other populations in need of services are:

- Children and youth, including
 - Children left behind when parents are deported;
 - o Children coming out of the juvenile justice system
- Single female heads of household;
- Persons with medical problems, who are eligible for care and benefits for a limited time, but are unable to work or gain citizenship, and heath care then becomes unaffordable;
- Persons with behavior health disabilities, who are not eligible for services unless they have proper documentation;
- Refugees, who are eligible for housing for 3-6 months;
- Those experiencing homelessness, who are likely to be without/lose necessary documentation for services;
- Seniors;
- Those with language barriers.

Service Needs

Top priority service needs are:

- Educational opportunities for adults (4), including
 - o GED
 - o ESL
 - Job skills
 - Computer training
 - Life skills
- Affordable health care and medications (3)
- Health and wellness skills and services (2), including
 - Free health and wellness checks and consultations;
 - o Health and wellness education for healthy life styles;
 - Nutritious food;
 - Life skills
- Educational opportunities for children (2), including tutoring and afterschool program.

Other identified needs include:

- Assistance in obtaining citizenship;
- Access to interpretation/translation services;
- Cultural transition services;
- Domestic violence counseling for children and adults;
- Transportation, public and private (gas cards, repairs);
- Emergency cash assistance;
- Utilities assistance;
- Respite/hospice care for those with physical illnesses;
- Transitional housing.

Physical Factors in Housing and Community Development

The most important factors identified were:

- Walking distance to schools (3);
- On-site, quality child care (2);
- Walking distance to parks, playgrounds and green spaces (2).

Other factors include:

- Access to public transportation
- On-site multi-purpose community space with computers;
- On-site staff who are bilingual and culturally competent

Also:

- Safety: gated access and proximity to a police sub-station;
- Walking distance to grocery stores; community/recreation centers; churches/spiritual centers;
- Street lights/traffic lights at street crossings;
- More 3-bedroom units;
- On-site laundry;
- Kitchen for tenant use;
- Culturally-friendly architecture.

Fair Housing Actions:

- Identify gate-keepers in the community to disseminate information about fair housing;
- Hold service-providers accountable for promoting fair housing.

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Veterans

Wednesday, March 14, 2012 5:30-7:00 PM

Three (3) participants represented government and private sector organizations providing housing and supportive services for veterans, as well as a representative of the local area United Way.

Populations in Need

The population most in need of services was identified as *families with children*, headed by the *most recent veterans* from military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In particular, there is a need for housing and services that *keep all members of the family together*, rather than forcing family members apart because of program restrictions around sex and age.

Many of these more recent veterans were members of National Guard Units who had jobs before they were deployed, but are finding themselves unable to return to and/or keep these jobs because of service-related physical and behavioral health disabilities. When they do find employment, the types of jobs and wages/benefits provide a lower standard of living than pre-deployment jobs.

Other populations in need:

- Veterans with behavioral health disabilities, including substance abuse, PTSD, and trauma, including sexual trauma experienced by both male and female veterans; 80-90% of veterans have experienced trauma either before or during their military service.
- Veterans with physical disabilities, including loss of limbs and head injuries.
- Veterans involved in the justice system; attempts are underway to establish a Veterans Court, to deal with veterans facing less serious legal charges, e.g., DUI/DWI, substance abuse, less serious domestic violence.
- Older veterans, who are experiencing increasing health problems, or who are in transition from independent living to retirement or assisted living.

Service Needs

The most important needs to be addressed are:

- Life skills and self-care, including financial management, shopping and cooking for good nutrition, and parenting skills;
- **Socialization skills**, opportunities, encouragement and support to counter isolation and boredom, in particular intergenerational activities that all members of the family can participate in to promote health and social engagement.
- Transportation, public and private
- Furnishing and household goods

Other needs noted include:

- Child development, education and socialization;
- Domestic Violence counseling
- Dental services
- A Resources Website

Physical Factors for Housing/Community

The most important factors to consider in housing and community development are:

- Two to three bedroom units to accommodate families;
- Community or activities room or courtyard;
- On-site services and activities coordinator.

Other factors include:

- Proximity to VA services;
- ADA- compliant;
- Proximity to public transportation or access to van service;
- Child safe and friendly environment, with gated access, colorful and child-friendly décor;
- Pet friendly;
- Walking distance to parks and recreation centers;
- Nature elements, including community gardens;
- Good management, with clarity in rules and consistency in enforcement;
- Good maintenance.

Fair Housing

Issues: Although discrimination against protected classes appears to be relatively rare among this service population, veterans with behavioral health or substance abuse issues, judicial involvement or legal problems, or those with prior histories of evictions encounter challenges in finding and maintaining suitable housing. There is some question as to whether veterans are knowledgeable about fair housing laws and resources

Actions:

Effective case management is seen as key. This includes identifying and developing working relationships with landlords who will work with the agency to provide a supportive structure for veterans who are reintegrating into the community.

"Thoughtful" education of tenants and landlords on veteran issues, including PTSD, and on available resources could be supported by a website providing information on land-lord tenant relations and other related issues.

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on Children, Youth and Families

Thursday, March 15, 2012

9:30-11:00 AM

Thirteen (13) persons representing child and family service providers, advocacy organizations, and funding agencies participated in the Focus Group on children, youth and families.

Populations in Need

Highest priority was assigned to the following groups:

- Homeless families with children (6);
- Families with children whose caregivers/parents have physical or behavioral health disabilities, including chronic illnesses (e.g., AIDS) and substance abuse issues (6);
- Working poor families (5);
- Young children up to 6 years old (5);
- Homeless youth, including those transitioning out of foster care or juvenile justice systems (5);
- Immigrant families, particularly those in danger of deportation (4).

Other populations in need include:

- Parents/caregivers with arrest/conviction records;
- Single parent headed households;
- Unemployed veterans who are parents/caretakers;
- Domestic violence victims;
- Families living in motels;
- Senior caretakers, e.g., grandparents raising grandchildren.

Service Needs

Considerable support (10 votes) was voiced for a

- Rapid re-housing program, with a particular focus on larger families, that would include:
 - o Motel vouchers;
 - Temporary housing for larger families;
 - Negotiations with landlords to encourage renting to families.

Other high priority service needs include:

- Free child care with flexible hours (6);
- Permanent supportive housing for families (5);
- Eviction prevention and help with move-in assistance (4)
- Public transportation and assistance for car repairs (4)
- Case management services (3);
- Job training and placement, particularly for ex-felons (2);
- Family physical and behavioral health care (2);
- Emergency food assistance and food pantries, especially for the hotel population (1);
- Legal knowledge and access to legal services (e.g., for youth emancipation) (1),
- Outreach and assistance in obtaining public benefits, e.g., through SOAR (1).

Physical Factors for Housing and Community Development:

The most important desirables identified are:

- More 3-bedroom units (6);
- On-site child care (5);
- Proximity to schools, grocery stores, bus stops (5);

Other desirables include:

- A family-friendly shelter (4).
- Energy efficiency (3);
- On-site playground/courtyard (2);
- On-site garden, with access to water (2)
- A multipurpose recreation/activities room, with access to wireless computers and phones (2)
- Universal design/ADA accessible (1)
- Generous common kitchen, accessible to residents (1);
- Safety and security;
- Pet-friendly/dog-park;
- Curb appeal;
- Walking trails;
- Mixed income units;
- Community advisory.

Fair Housing

Those experiencing barriers to housing include:

- Youth;
- Larger families;
- LGBT persons;
- Minority felons (disparate treatment);
- Those with histories of evictions or bad credit.

Actions:

- More flexibility on background checks, including a reasonable appeals process;
- Meaningful and timely enforcement of fair housing laws;
- Review of policies that that may discourage landlords from renting to populations in need, including the City's nuisance abatement and crime free properties programs;
- Advocacy by case managers;
- On-going, regularly scheduled trainings

For:

- o Residents, especially new tenants;
- Property managers and staff;
- o Advocates and service staff.

On:

- Credit;
- Predatory lending;
- o Landlord-Tenant responsibilities.

Provided by:

- City Fair Housing Office;
- Legal Aid;
- o HUD;
- o Private banks (e.g., Bank of America)

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City of Albuquerque Five Year Consolidated Plan Focus Group on African-Americans

Thursday, March 15, 2012

1:00-2:30 PM

Fourteen (14) participants in the African American Focus group represented housing development, health, legal services, social services and employment agencies, cultural and advocacy organizations, local faith-based organizations, and the local area United Way.

Populations in Need

The highest priority for populations in need was accorded to:

- Persons transitioning from incarceration (6);
- Intergenerational often large families (5);
- Elders (4);
- Persons with behavioral health disabilities or substance abuse issues (4) .

Other populations in need include:

- Persons who are homeless (3);
- Youth, including
 - Youth transitioning from the juvenile justice system (3);
 - Youth transitioning from foster care (2);
- Working poor (2);
- Veterans (1);
- Single-parent households (1);
- Young children (1);
- Persons with physical disabilities (1);
- Persons who have lost homes through foreclosure (1).

Service Needs

The most important needs identified were:

- Financial literacy (8);
- Life skills (6), including
 - Parenting education;
 - o Knowledge about and ability to access needed resources;
- Information and assistance to first-time home-buyers, including HUD programs and low-interest loans (5);

- A "second chance" program for those transitioning out of incarceration (5), that includes:
 - o Counseling
 - Networking and connections
 - Substance abuse treatment
- Assistance to elders (5) in accessing:
 - Health care;
 - Housing
 - Food
 - o Home repairs
 - Taxes
 - o Respite care
 - Advocacy
 - o Protection

In addition, participants asked for:

- Culturally sensitive outreach to the African American community to identify, support and disseminate information about current, effective programs for African American Albuquerqueans (3);
- Training for landlords (2) on fair housing laws, what constitutes "profiling," and how to help support tenants with special needs or issues, such as domestic violence;
- More flexible policies pertaining to background checks, "crime free" neighborhoods, etc. (1)
- More vouchers for residents in motels, transitional and permanent housing (1)

Physical Factors in Housing and Community Development

The most important factor identified in building desirable housing and community was

Proximity to desired goods and services (10).

There was a strong preference expressed for:

- Renovating existing properties in the neighborhoods (7);
- Scattered-site housing options (5);
- Single family homes (4);
- Low density, larger plot sizes (3);
- Street lights (2);
- Porches (2);
- Back yards (2);
- More generous living spaces (2);

• Street lighting (2).

Fair Housing

Issues:

- Redlining;
- Steering, including subtle steering, e.g., by unit within buildings;
- Additional and unadvertised requirements imposed to discourage renters;
- Differential treatment of formerly incarcerated African Americans.

Actions:

- Full, public and readily accessible disclosure of all costs and conditions of housing;
- More testing (Protection and Advocacy);
- Stricter enforcement and prosecution;
- Restore the function of the City's Human Rights Office;
- Build capacity of community-based organizations to serve as trustworthy sources of information and advice regarding fair housing.

AFRICAN AMERCIAN FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

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	African American Health			
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